

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 04981 301201Z
ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: OCON ILET NL
SUBJECT: LATIN AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR TRANSNATIONAL STUDIES
(ILET) SEMINAR IN AMSTERDAM, SEPTEMBER 5-8

REF: THE HAGUE 4215

1. DURING THE SUMMER DUTCH MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION JAN PRONK WAS UNDER HEAVY CRITICISM FOR GIVING GON FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO A SYMPOSIUM OF ILET (LATIN AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR TRANSNATIONAL STUDIES) PLANNED FOR EARLY SEPTEMBER. DESPITE THE CONTROVERSY PRECEDING THE MEETING (REFTEL), THE MEETING TENDED TO BE SOMEWHAT OF AN ANTICLIMAX. PARTICIPANTS LISTENED TO READING OF PAPERS AND ARGUED OVER THE WAYS TO CORRECT THE "INEQUALITY" IN INTERNATIONAL NEWS COVERAGE RESULTING FROM NEWS SELECTION POLICIES OF MAJOR WIRE SERVICES. NO DECISIONS WERE MADE. A SUMMARY OF THE DEBATE IS SCHEDULED TO APPEAR LATER.

2. SINCE HIS APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER IN 1973, PRONK HAS SERVED AS THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT'S PROTAGONIST IN THE ARENA OF THIRD-WORLD POLITICAL ISSUES. IN DOING SO HE HAS REFLECTED THE STRONG MORALISTIC ORIENTATION OF A VOCAL SEGMENT OF DUTCH PUBLIC OPINION. THE RHUBARB ABOUT ILET REFLECTS STRONG
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DISAGREEMENT HERE WITH SOME OF PRONK'S AID POLICIES AS WELL AS A MARKED PERSONAL DISLIKE FOR HIS LIFE STYLE AND HIS REPORTEDLY HEAVY DRINKING.

3. THE CONTROVERSY ABOUT ILET RESULTED WHEN ARTICLES IN DUTCH PRESS CLAIMED THAT ILET'S PRESCRIPTION FOR MOVING THE "INEQUALITY" WOULD LEAD TO EVEN GREATER INEQUALITY THROUGH

RESTRICTION OF THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION. PRONK'S ARGUMENT
IN FAVOR OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS ILET MAY BE LOSING
SOME OF ITS APPEAL TO A POPULATION LONG USED TO SUPPORTING
IDEOLOGICALLY MARGINAL ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN A GENEROUS DEVELOP-
MENT BUDGET. BECAUSE THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS STILL BEING FORMED,
IT IS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT A CHANGE IN THE OVERALL DIRECTION
OF DUTCH DEVELOPMENT AID, BUT PRONK'S PHILOSOPHY FOR GIVING
AID TO CONTROVERSIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CAUSES WILL CONTINUE TO
BE SUBJECTED TO CRITICAL SCRUTINY.
MCCLOSKEY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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